

Washington, D.C. - As part of her continuing efforts to promote fiscal responsibility, transparency and accountability in Congress, Rep. Melissa Bean called on Congress to require an up-or-down vote on raising the federal government's maximum level of debt, or "debt ceiling."

"We have had to take extraordinary steps over this last year to protect our financial system and bolster our economy, but the long-term trends in federal spending are unsustainable," Bean said. "Requiring a vote on increasing our maximum debt ceiling will hold Congress accountable and move us towards forging a solution."

Congress will soon consider raising the debt ceiling by \$1.8 trillion to a record \$14 trillion. Since 1980, House Rule XXVIII, more commonly known as "The Gephardt Rule," allows the House to raise the debt ceiling without an up or down vote. To date, this rule has been used 31 times.

This proposal, H. Res. 965, would repeal the Gephardt Rule. It is cosponsored by Reps. Jim Cooper (TN-05) and Harry Mitchell (AZ-05).

Earlier this year, Congresswoman Bean introduced H.Res. 287, the Voting Record Transparency Resolution. Currently, the House Clerk only organizes representatives' votes by Roll Call number. This makes it difficult for constituents to easily access their representative's

voting record. Similar to legislation she first introduced in 2008, this bipartisan bill would change the House rules to require the Clerk, who already maintains a database of Congressional voting records, to sort such data by representative and make it accessible from each representative's publicly-funded official website.

Bean is also an original cosponsor of Rep. Cooper's Securing America's Future Economy (SAFE) Commission Act, H.R. 1557. The bill establishes an independent, bipartisan commission to investigate reforms to our nation's entitlement programs and federal budgeting process. Congress would be required to introduce and pass legislation to implement the commission's recommendations, or an alternate plan, within 90 days or lose budgeting authority.